

CLAIMS

1 1. A method for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, comprising:
3 receiving a request for the preferred
4 category of seating;
5 determining if the preferred category
6 of seating is available;
7 providing notification that the
8 preferred category of seating is available;
9 guaranteeing the preferred category
10 of seating;
11 assigning a passenger to a "flexible"
12 seat assignment within the guaranteed category of
13 seating;
14 reassigning the passenger to a
15 different "flexible" seat assignment within the
16 guaranteed category of seating based on another
17 request; and
18 converting the "flexible" seat
19 assignment to a "permanent" seat assignment.

1 2. A method for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, comprising:
3 receiving a request for at least one
4 preferred category of seating;
5 determining if the at least one
6 preferred category of seating is available; and
7 guaranteeing the at least one
8 preferred category of seating.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising
2 providing notification that the at least one preferred
3 category of seating is available.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the request is
2 received from a travel agent.

1 5. The method of claim 2, wherein the request is
2 received from a passenger.

1 6. The method of claim 2, further comprising
2 assigning a passenger to a "flexible" seat assignment within
3 the at least one guaranteed category of seating.

1 7. The method of claim 6, further comprising
2 reassigning the passenger to a different "flexible" seat

3 assignment within the at least one guaranteed category of
4 seating based on another request.

1 8. The method of claim 2, wherein guaranteeing the
2 at least one preferred category of seating comprises
3 reassigning at least one passenger within the at least one
4 passenger's at least one guaranteed category of seating.

1 9. The method of claim 2, wherein the request is
2 received when an airline reservation is being made.

1 10. The method of claim 2, wherein the request is
2 received after an airline reservation is made and prior to a
3 check-in process.

1 11. The method of claim 2, wherein the request is
2 received during the check-in process.

1 12. The method of claim 2, wherein the request is
2 received when a passenger inquires about a flight reservation.

1 13. The method of claim 2, wherein a preferred
2 category of seating is a window seat.

1 14. The method of claim 2, wherein a preferred
2 category of seating is an aisle seat.

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1 23. The method of claim 22, wherein converting the
2 flexible seat assignment to a permanent seat assignment occurs
3 for all passengers simultaneously.

1 24. The method of claim 23, wherein converting the
2 flexible seat assignment to a permanent seat assignment occurs
3 when check-in begins.

1 25. The method of claim 23, wherein converting the
2 flexible seat assignment to a permanent seat assignment occurs
3 when boarding initiates.

1 26. The method of claim 22, wherein converting the
2 flexible seat assignment to a permanent seat assignment occurs
3 as the passenger inserts a boarding pass into a boarding pass
4 reader.

1 27. A method for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, comprising:

3 receiving a request for multiple
4 preferred categories of seating;

5 determining which of the multiple
6 preferred categories of seating are available; and

7 guaranteeing at least one preferred
8 category of seating.

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7 means for providing notification that
8 the preferred category of seating is available;

9 means for guaranteeing the preferred
10 category of seating;

11 means for assigning a passenger to a
12 "flexible" seat assignment within the guaranteed
13 category of seating;

14 means for reassigning the passenger
15 to a different "flexible" seat assignment within the
16 guaranteed category of seating based on another
17 request; and

18 means for converting the "flexible"
19 seat assignment to a "permanent" seat assignment.

1 39. A system for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, comprising:

3 means for receiving a request for at
4 least one preferred category of seating;

5 means for determining if the at least
6 one preferred category of seating is available; and

7 means for guaranteeing the at least
8 one preferred category of seating.

1 57. The system of claim 56, further comprising
2 means for providing notification that at least one of the
3 preferred categories of seating is available.

1 58. The system of claim 57, further comprising
2 means for receiving an indication that at least one of the
3 available preferred categories of seating is acceptable.

1 59. The system of claim 56, further comprising
2 means for defining a maximum number of preferred categories of
3 seating allowable within the request.

1 60. The system of claim 56, further comprising
2 means for assigning a passenger to a "flexible" seat
3 assignment within the at least one guaranteed category of
4 seating.

1 61. The system of claim 60, further comprising
2 means for reassigning the passenger to a different "flexible"
3 seat assignment within the at least one guaranteed category of
4 seating based on another request.

1 62. The system of claim 56, wherein means for
2 guaranteeing at least one preferred category of seating
3 comprises means for reassigning at least one passenger within

4 the at least one passenger's at least one guaranteed category
5 of seating.

1 63. The system of claim 60, further comprising:
2 means for converting the "flexible"
3 seat assignment to a "permanent" seat assignment;
4 and
5 means for prohibiting reallocation of
6 the permanent seat assignment.

1 64. A system for requesting an airline reservation
2 for a preferred category of seating, comprising:
3 means for transmitting a request for
4 at least one preferred category of seating; and
5 means for receiving notification
6 guaranteeing the at least one preferred category of
7 seating.

1 65. A system for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, the system comprising:
3 a storage device storing a program;
4 a processor in communication with the
5 storage device, the processor operative with the
6 program to:


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7             receive a request for at least one
8 preferred category of seating;
9             determine if the at least one
10 preferred category of seating is available;
11             guarantee the at least one preferred
12 category of seating.

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1 67. A system for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, the system comprising:
3 a storage device storing a program;
4 a processor in communication with the
5 storage device, the processor operative with the
6 program to:

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7             receive a request for multiple
8 preferred categories of seating;
9             determine which of the multiple
10 preferred categories of seating are available; and
11             guarantee at least one preferred
12 category of seating.

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1 68. A system for processing airline reservations
2 for a preferred category of seating, the system comprising:
3 a storage device storing a program;

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1 71. An article of manufacture for causing a
2 computer to process airline reservations for a preferred
3 category of seating, comprising:

4 means for causing the computer to
5 receive a request for multiple preferred categories
6 of seating;

7 means for causing the computer to
8 determine which of the multiple preferred categories
9 of seating are available; and

10 means for causing the computer to
11 guarantee at least one preferred category of
12 seating.

1 72. A method for processing reservations for a
2 preferred category of service, comprising:

3 receiving a request for the preferred
4 category of service;

5 determining if the preferred category
6 of service is available;

7 guaranteeing the preferred category
8 of service;

1 92. The method of claim 87, wherein the seating is
2 for an arena.

- 52 -

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